

REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 7, 8 and 9 have been cancelled, claims 2 and 10 have been amended, and claim 15 has been added. Thus, claims 2, 5, 6 and 10-15 are now active in the application. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application are respectfully requested.

In items 2 and 3 on page 2 of the Office Action, claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. This rejection is believed moot in view of the cancellation of claim 8.

In items 4-7 on pages 2-5 of the Office Action, claims 2, 7-9 and 10-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Nagata (U.S. 4,729,539); and claims 5, 6, 13 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nagata in view of Ogasawara (JP 6-50374). These rejections are clearly inapplicable to amended claims 2 and 10, for the following reasons.

With exemplary reference to the drawing figures, amended claim 2 sets forth a frame structure for an automobile seat, comprising: a frame 8 to be vertically movably mounted on a vehicle floor; a lifter L for adjusting a height of the frame 8; and a suspension unit S for absorbing vibration inputted to the frame 8; wherein the lifter L is integrally formed with the suspension unit S and comprises a torsion bar 18 to be rotatably mounted on the vehicle floor, the torsion bar 18 having first and second ends opposite to each other and a third link mechanism (e.g. 36, 38, 40, 42, 50); wherein the lifter L further comprises a first link mechanism (e.g. 20, 24, 26, 28), a second link mechanism (e.g. 22, 30), through which the torsion bar 18 is connected to the frame 8, a first operating mechanism (e.g. 30) connected to the first link mechanism (20, 24, 26), and a second operating mechanism (e.g. 56) connected to the third link mechanism (36, 38, 40, 42, 50), wherein height adjustments of a front end portion of the frame 8 are carried out via the first link mechanism (20, 24, 26) and height adjustments of a rear end portion of the frame 8 are carried out via the second link mechanism (22, 32) by operating the first operating mechanism 30 to twist the first end of the torsion bar 18, and wherein weight adjustments are

carried out via a third link mechanism (36, 38, 40, 42, 50) by operating the second operating mechanism 56 to twist the second end of the torsion bar 18.

In contrast to the present invention of amended claim 2, the Nagata patent (U.S. 4,729,539), although including a first operating mechanism 26 to twist the first end of the torsion bar 20, does not include a second operating mechanism to twist the second end of the torsion bar 20.

Because of this clear difference between the present invention of claim 2 and the Nagata reference, it is apparent that claim 2 is not anticipated by the Nagata reference. The Examiner cited the Ogasawara reference (JP 6-50374) for disclosing "a suspension (10) comprising a magnet unit (unlabeled) having a movable magnet (30) and stationary magnets (48) (50)." However, the Ogasawara reference provides no teaching or suggestion that would have obviated the above-discussed shortcoming of the Nagata reference.

Accordingly, it is submitted that there is no teaching or suggestion in the references of record that would have motivated a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the Nagata reference or to make any combination of the references of record in such a manner as to result in or otherwise render obvious the present invention of claim 2. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 2, as well as claims 5 and 6 which depend therefrom, are clearly allowable over the prior art of record.

Again with exemplary reference to the drawing figures, amended independent claim 10 sets forth a frame structure for an automobile seat, comprising: a frame 8 to be vertically movably mounted on a vehicle floor; a lifter L for adjusting a height of the frame 8; and a suspension unit S for absorbing vibration inputted to the frame 8; wherein the lifter L is integrally formed with the suspension unit S; wherein the lifter L comprises a torsion bar 18, and a first user-operable adjuster mechanism (e.g. 56) operably coupled to the torsion bar 18 such that operation of the user-operable adjuster mechanism 56 causes twisting of the torsion bar 18, and a second user-operable adjuster mechanism (e.g. 30) operably coupled to the torsion bar 18 such that operation of the second user-operable adjuster mechanism 30 causes twisting of the

torsion bar 18; wherein the torsion bar is operably coupled with the frame 8 to apply a lifting force to the frame 8, and such that twisting of the torsion bar 18 causes change in a lifting force applied to the frame 8 by the torsion bar 18; wherein the first and second user-operable adjuster mechanisms 56, 30 are independently operable; and wherein the first and second user-operable adjuster mechanisms 56, 30 are operably coupled to the torsion bar 18 so that operation of the first user-operable mechanism 56 and operation of the second user-operable adjuster mechanism 30 independently cause twisting of the torsion bar 18.

In contrast to the present invention as now recited in claim 10, although the Nagata reference discloses a first-operable adjuster mechanism 26 for twisting the torsion bar 20, it does not disclose or suggest a second user-operable adjuster mechanism that twists the torsion bar independently of the first user-operable adjuster mechanism, as required by claim 10.

Accordingly, because of this clear difference between the present invention of claim 10 and the Nagata patent, it is submitted to be apparent that claim 10 is not anticipated by the Nagata patent.

Furthermore, the Ogasawara reference, cited by the Examiner for teaching a magnetic suspension unit 10, clearly fails to obviate the above-discussed shortcoming of the Nagata reference.

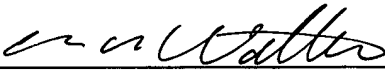
As such, it is submitted that the difference between the present invention of claim 10 and the Nagata reference is such that a person having ordinary skill in the art clearly not have been motivated to modify the Nagata patent or to make any combination of the references of record in such a manner as to result in or otherwise render obvious the present invention of claim 10. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 10, as well as claims 11-15 which depend therefrom, are clearly allowable over the prior art of record.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is clearly in condition for allowance. An early notice thereof is earnestly solicited.

If, after reviewing this Amendment, the Examiner feels there are any issues remaining which must be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned by telephone in order to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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